



The Old Ironsides Report



Monday, December 15, 2003

Army stopping conditional NCO promotions to ease backlog

By **Lisa Burgess**, Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — A new Army policy that halts all conditional enlisted promotions after Jan. 1 will help ease an enormous backlog of soldiers waiting to attend the requisite school for the higher rank, the Army's top enlisted soldier for personnel issues said.

"The numbers of soldiers [waiting for NCO schools] kept increasing, and we didn't have the capacity to train them" as long as conditional promotions existed, Sgt. Maj. Julian Edmondson, the personnel policy integrator at the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, said in a Thursday telephone interview.

A "conditional promotion" almost always happen on deployments, when a soldier is needed to fill a higher position and otherwise qualifies for the job. The soldier sews the higher rank on and receives the pay increase.

Until now, Army rules allowed conditionally promoted soldiers a certain amount of time to attend the school or lose the rank.

Thanks to high deployment tempos, however, there is now a backlog of more than 36,600 conditionally promoted soldiers waiting to attend various NCO courses, Edmondson said.

So even as Army officials scramble to develop a "priority list" of soldiers to attend NCO schools, they decided to break the backlog by adopting a new policy: as of Jan. 1, no more conditional promotions.

The thousands of conditionally promoted soldiers will be allowed to keep their current ranks, Edmondson said.

The same policy also has a special provision that will make it easier for specialists and corporals to jump into noncommissioned officer status, even without conditional promotions.

Army policy had stated that specialists and corporals could conditionally be promoted to sergeant — but if they did not graduate from Primary Leadership Development Course within one year of sewing on the stripe, they could not keep the rank, Edmondson said.

As of Jan. 1, however, specialists and corporals who otherwise score enough points on their promotion boards can make it to sergeant, and keep the rank indefinitely, without attending the course.

However, any sergeants who want to advance to the next rank, staff sergeant, will have to graduate from the course, Edmondson said.

"Before, we would promote you to [sergeant] conditionally, upon your going to school," Edmondson said. "Now, we're saying that you need school to make the next grade."



Saddam Hussein Captured

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - Without firing a shot, American forces captured a bearded and haggard-looking Saddam Hussein in an underground hide-out on a farm near his hometown of Tikrit, ending one of the most intensive manhunts in history.

The arrest was a huge victory for U.S. forces battling an insurgency by the ousted dictator's followers. In the capital, radio stations played celebratory music, residents fired small arms in the air in celebration and passengers on buses and trucks shouted, "They got Saddam! They got Saddam!"

After sundown, large explosions were heard in central Baghdad, and flames and thick smoke were seen; a policeman said there were no casualties.

The Army adopted conditional promotions as a "temporary" policy in 1992, when cuts in the service's training budget prevented many soldiers from attending their next NCO school on time, Edmondson said.

Before the policy could be rescinded, however, the Army became involved in a near-constant series of deployments that began in the mid-1990s with Bosnia, Somalia and Haiti, and continues today with Iraq and Afghanistan.

Conditional promotions "accelerated pretty quickly when deployment tempos increased," Edmondson said.

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News...

Baghdadis Celebrate Saddam's Capture

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - Celebratory gunfire rang out across the Iraqi capital, radios played festive music, drivers honked their horns and passengers on buses and trucks chanted "They got Saddam, they got Saddam," as word of the former dictator's capture spread from car to car and shop to shop on a sun-filled Sunday afternoon. U.S. troops stationed around the country cheered when they heard the news and held back as Iraqis fired their guns in the air. Iraqi journalists gave U.S. officials a standing ovation and cheered wildly when video of a captured Saddam was shown during a news conference announcing the arrest.

World Leaders Welcome Saddam's Capture

LONDON (AP) - World leaders including the Iraq war's most prominent opponents welcomed Saddam Hussein's capture, saying it brought a long-awaited end to the career of a brutal dictator and could mark the beginning of peace in Iraq. The U.S. military announced that a bearded Saddam offered no resistance when he was caught hiding in a tiny underground "spider hole" on a farm near his hometown of Tikrit, ending one of the most intense manhunts in history.

Scientists Warn of Coming Flu Pandemic

NEW YORK (AP) - As bad as this year's flu season is, it hasn't brought the worldwide outbreak known as a pandemic. But experts warn that a pandemic is coming, it's just a question of when. "It's going to happen," said Dr. Greg Poland of the Mayo Clinic. "For the American public in particular, I think it will be horrific."

Chaplain's thought for the day...

"Scientists say the darndest things"

There was once a doctor who was laughed to scorn because of his theory. His doctor peers seemed to think of him as a water boy among doctors where his theory was concerned. He had speculated that the reason that so many patients were dying following surgery was because of a poor sanitation factor. He had made the suggestion that doctors thoroughly wash their hands before surgery. He was humiliated and ridiculed by his peers for his theory. The ridicule and humiliation took such a great toll on him that this doctor died in a mental institution.

History proved that this doctor was right: his antiseptic theory. (paraphrased: Bruce Larson. No Longer Strangers. Waco: Word Book Publisher, 1971, p. 20)....

Who would have thought that this scientist just might have been right? When someone dares to think outside the box, instead of giving ridicule, we should give an ear.

From the entertainment worold...

Dolly Parton Delivers Millionth Book

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn. (AP) -- Country singer Dolly Parton's book program, which she started seven years ago to inspire preschoolers to read, has reached a milestone with delivery of its millionth book.

Parton was on hand Friday when her Imagination Library gave a copy of "The Little Engine That Could" to the parents of 1-year-old Cana Waynick of Danville, Ala. Children start receiving books at birth and continue through 60 selections until age 5.

Parton launched the library in 1996 to promote reading among children in Sevier County, the rural community where she grew up in the Great Smoky Mountains. Today, 206 communities in 35 states participate in Imagination Library.

The Grammy-winning singer and actress attended one-room schoolhouses and was the first in her family to graduate from high school. She says she has always enjoyed reading, even though she didn't like school.

"Mama could read," Parton said. "She went up to the eighth grade. She got married when she was in the eighth grade. Daddy didn't go to school. Mama read the Bible to us all the time, and I am sure that's why I started reading."

Movie Star Whale Keiko Dies of Pneumonia

OSLO, Norway (AP) - For kids, Keiko the killer whale was the charming hero of "Free Willy." For biologists, he was the focus of fierce debate on whether captive animals could be returned to the wild. Keiko, who died of pneumonia this week, never strayed far from humans, keeping company with them in a Norwegian fjord to the end.

Keiko's apparent love of human company - and his popularity - frustrated handlers' dreams that he would one day leave them in search of food on his own. Millions of dollars were spent trying to teach him to survive, but he didn't bond with other whales, apparently feared swimming under ice and died less than two years after he was freed.

Safety message...

FIELD EXPEDIENCY or "CUTTING CORNERS"

DON'T

- DO A JOB WITHOUT THE PROPER EQUIPMENT
- RUSH A JOB IF THERE IS NOT A COMBAT NECESSITY
- "RE-WIRE THE HOUSE IF YOUR NOT AN ELECTRICIAN"

DO

- ✓ STOP, THINK, AND THEN ACT
- ✓ SEEK GUIDANCE IF UNSURE
- ✓ LOOK FOR SAFER ALTERNATIVES





























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myafn.net TV SCHEDULES: MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2003				As of: Sunday, December 14, 2003 7:58:51 PM		
Start Time	SPORTS	ATLANTIC	SPECTRUM	PACIFIC	NEWS	Start Time
00:00	NFL - GREEN BAY PACKERS @ SAN DIEGO CHARGERS	NFL - DALLAS COWBOYS @ WASHINGTON REDSKINS	MAGNUM P.I. : - LEGANCY FROM A FRIEND	NFL - CLEVELAND BROWNS @ DENVER BRONCOS	CNN SUNDAY	00:00
01:00			FAMILY TIES : - NOTHING BUT A MAN		MEET THE PRESS	01:00
01:30			THE COSBY SHOW : - LOST WEEKEND			01:30
02:00			CHIPS : - GREEN THUMB BURGLER		TIM RUSSERT	02:00
03:00	SPORTSCENTER	HEADLINE NEWS	RUGRATS : - SISTER ACT	DORA: THE EXPLORER	FOX REPORT	03:00
03:30	NFL PRIMETIME	SEINFELD : - THE OPERA	SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (TV-7): - NO FREE RIDES / I'M YOUR BIGGEST FANATIC	WHEEL OF FORTUNE		03:30
04:00		THAT 70'S SHOW : - BABY FEVER	THE SIMPSONS : - TENNIS THE MENACE	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	THIS WEEK	04:00
04:30	NFL - NY GIANTS @ NEW ORLEANS SAINTS	ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT	HOME IMPROVEMENT : - PLOYS FOR TOTS			04:30
05:00			BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER : - CONVERSATIONS WITH DEAD PEOPLE	THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW	DATELINE INTERNATIONAL	05:00
05:30		WWE SMACKDOWN!				05:30
06:00			LAW & ORDER : - HUBRIS	HEADLINE NEWS	60 MINUTES	06:00
06:30		AMERICA'S BLACK FORUM		JUDGE JUDY		06:30
07:00		MEET THE PRESS	CRITICAL RESCUE : - F-5	ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	CNN PRESENTS	07:00
07:25				GUIDING LIGHT		07:25
07:30	SPORTSCENTER					07:30
08:00		HEADLINE NEWS	AMERICAN CHOPPER		LARRY KING LIVE	08:00
08:13				GENERAL HOSPITAL		08:13
08:30		ESPNEWS				08:30
09:00	NFL PRIMETIME	SESAME STREET	THE PRINCE OF EGYPT	ZOOBOOMAF00 : - HORSES	AT LARGE WITH GERALDO RIVERA	09:00
09:30				DISNEY'S BUZZ LIGHTYEAR OF STAR COMMAND : - HOLIDAY TIME		09:30
10:00	SPORTSCENTER	DORA: THE EXPLORER		CYBERCHASE	ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	10:00
10:30		WHEEL OF FORTUNE		EVEN STEVENS : - FAMILY PICNIC		10:30
11:00	SPORTSCENTER	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	RUGRATS : - SISTER ACT	JEOPARDY!	BELTWAY BOYS	11:00
11:30	PGA TOUR - TARGET WORLD CHALLENGE: FINAL ROUND		SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (TV-7): - NO FREE RIDES / I'M YOUR BIGGEST FANATIC	HEADLINE NEWS	ON ASSIGNMENT	11:30
11:46		THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW				11:46
11:52				PACIFIC REPORT		11:52
12:00			THE SIMPSONS : - TENNIS THE MENACE	ESPNEWS	BULLS & BEARS	12:00
12:30			HOME IMPROVEMENT : - PLOYS FOR TOTS	HEADLINE NEWS	CAVUTO ON BUSINESS	12:30
12:35		GUIDING LIGHT				12:35
12:52				PACIFIC REPORT		12:52
13:00			BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER : - CONVERSATIONS WITH DEAD PEOPLE	SURVIVOR: PEARL ISLANDS	60 MINUTES	13:00
13:17		GENERAL HOSPITAL				13:17
14:00		HEADLINE NEWS	LAW & ORDER : - HUBRIS		CNN DAYBREAK	14:00
14:30	SPORTSCENTER	JUDGE JUDY				14:30
15:00		TODAY	CRITICAL RESCUE : - F-5	SURVIVOR: PEARL ISLANDS	GOOD MORNING AMERICA	15:00
16:00	NHL - DALLAS STARS @ CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS		AMERICAN CHOPPER	HEADLINE NEWS		16:00
16:22				PACIFIC REPORT		16:22
16:30				TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO		16:30
17:00		ZOOBOOMAF00 : - HORSES	THE PRINCE OF EGYPT		HEADLINE NEWS	17:00
17:30		DISNEY'S BUZZ LIGHTYEAR OF STAR COMMAND : - HOLIDAY TIME		THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN	WORLD NEWS THIS MORNING	17:30
17:45					WORLD NEWS THIS MORNING	17:45
18:00	BEST DAMN SPORTS SHOW PERIOD	CYBERCHASE			THE EARLY SHOW	18:00
18:30		EVEN STEVENS : - FAMILY PICNIC		ACCESS HOLLYWOOD		18:30
19:00	SPORTSCENTER	JEOPARDY!	RUGRATS : - SISTER ACT	A CHRISTMAS CAROL		19:00
19:30		HEADLINE NEWS	SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (TV-7): - NO FREE RIDES / I'M YOUR BIGGEST FANATIC			19:30
20:00		ESPNEWS	THE SIMPSONS : - TENNIS THE MENACE		FOX NEWS LIVE	20:00
20:30	NBA FASTBREAK	HEADLINE NEWS	HOME IMPROVEMENT : - PLOYS FOR TOTS			20:30
20:45				THE YEARLING		20:45
21:00	COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ACC: PORTLAND @ DUKE	SURVIVOR: PEARL ISLANDS	BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER : - CONVERSATIONS WITH DEAD PEOPLE		60 MINUTES	21:00
22:00			LAW & ORDER : - HUBRIS		FOX NEWS LIVE	22:00
23:00	ESPNEWS	SURVIVOR: PEARL ISLANDS	CRITICAL RESCUE : - F-5	ESPNEWS	HEADLINE NEWS	23:00
23:30	ESPNEWS			HEADLINE NEWS	INSIDE POLITICS	23:30

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	RAMS (11-3)	27		COLTS (11-3)	38		BEARS (6-8)	13
	SEAHAWKS (8-6)	22		FALCONS (3-11)	7		VIKINGS (8-6)	10
	PATRIOTS (12-2)	27		JETS (6-8)	6		BUCCANEERS (7-7)	16
	JAGUARS (4-10)	13		STEELERS (5-9)	0		TEXANS (5-9)	3
	BENGALS (8-6)	41		TITANS (10-4)	28		CHIEFS (12-2)	45
	49ERS (6-8)	38		BILLS (6-8)	26		LIONS (4-10)	17
	COWBOYS (8-5)	27		BRONCOS (8-5)	23		RAIDERS (3-10)	20
	REDSKINS (5-8)	0		BROWNS (4-9)	20		RAVENS (8-5)	12
	PANTHERS (8-5)	20					PACKERS (7-6)	38
	CARDINALS (3-10)	17					CHARGERS (3-10)	21